

Benefits to the Community Victims & Offender

Offenders have an increased understanding of victims as people and community members.

- (1) Victims are heard and understood.
They experience satisfaction in planning compensation for their losses.
- (2) Reduces recidivism rates through helping juveniles understand the true impact of their actions.

Victim-Offender Dialogue Program

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This project is also supported by funds from the St. Louis Mental Health Board.

Family Court - Juvenile Division

Main Court
920 North Vandeventer Ave.
St. Louis, Missouri 63108
(314) 552-2000
(314) 552-2260 (Fax)
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday (Except Holidays)



If you need assistance or an accommodation in order to participate in these court services, please contact:

**THE AMERICANS with
DISABILITY COORDINATOR,
JANICE KOCH**

**at
920 North Vandeventer Ave
St. Louis, Missouri 63108
or by telephone
VOICE (314) 552-2118
TDD (314) 531-6158**

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Family Court - Juvenile Division
3827 Enright Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63108
(314) 552-2493
(314) 552-2452 (Fax)

Main Court: (314) 552-2000
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Dedicated to Juvenile Justice

Victim-Offender Dialogue

Victim-Offender Dialogue allows individuals directly affected by crime to actively participate in dealing with the consequences of crime.

The goal of the process is for the parties most affected to have an opportunity to safely meet, assisted by a Facilitator, to discuss:

- What happened?
- How parties felt when it happened?
- Why it happened?
- How it feels?
- What is needed to repair harm?

What is Restitution?

In Victim-Offender Dialogue, restitution means:

- The offender/parent agrees to repay a cash amount to replace the victim's out-of-pocket losses;
- The offender can do community service or personal service work; or
- Any creative plan agreed upon by both parties.

Why Participate in Dialogue?

Dialogue creates an opportunity to talk about the incident and answer questions only the parties involved can provide.

Participation in Victim-Offender Dialogue is voluntary for all parties involved:

Victims often report loss as more than what can be measured by material goods or financial

Emotional harm is not dealt with in criminal court. Most victims want to ask questions about the crime, or to talk about its emotional impact. Some may want to meet to see if they have a reason to fear the offender in the future.

Offenders don't learn about the human cost of their actions in a court setting. The dialogue process allows a time and place where they can learn how they have harmed the victim.

Offenders learn to accept responsibility for their actions. They can provide answers to the victim's questions, and they have a voice in determining how to make things right again.

How Does Dialogue work?

Before the dialogue date, the juvenile officer will meet with all parties individually, listen to each person tell how they were affected by what happened, explain the program, and if everyone agrees, send the case to the facilitator who will arrange the dialogue. The facilitator will call all parties and arrange a date, time and location for the dialogue to take place.

Participation in Dialogue is Always Voluntary!

During the dialogue, the facilitator sets the rules, ensures the process is safe and fair for all involved, and where necessary, helps the parties work out a restitution agreement.

What is a Facilitator?

A Facilitator acts in a neutral manner. They are present to **help** others communicate - facilitators do not take sides or make decisions for anyone. Facilitators are **skilled** in the dialogue process. Facilitators are **good listeners** who are respectful and bound by confidentiality rules.

Facilitators do not take sides.

Facilitators do not impose agreements.

What Does A Facilitator Do?

Facilitators schedule the dialogue date, time, location, provide safety, facilitate and assist the parties with the conferencing process.

When a case is referred for Dialogue, a facilitator will:

- call to arrange the time and location the dialogue is to take place at;
- explain the communication rules, confidentiality and dialogue process;
- listen as each person tells what happened and ask how each feels;
- makes sure everyone is respectful and feels safe;
- insures that all participants have uninterrupted time to speak;
- prepares an agreement that is fair and achievable;
- provides each party with a copy of the agreement if one is reached.

Facilitators help people in difficult situations to meet and talk with each other.